

HARBOURS OF REFUGE.

The select committee of the House of Commons on shipwrecks, which sat during the session of 1833, had their attention drawn to the formation of harbours of refuge. In their report they purposely refrained from recommending any particular situations for such harbours, from a conviction that such points would be best decided on by a body composed of scientific and competent persons, whose attention should be specially and exclusively directed to the subject.

In consequence of this, Sir Robert Peel recommended that a commission, to consist of the following gentlemen, should be appointed to inquire into the most eligible situations for such harbours in the channel, viz.:—Admiral Sir Bismarck Martin, G.C.B., chairman; Lieut. Gen. Sir Howard Douglas, Bart., G.C.B.; Rear-Admiral Deane Dundas, C.B.; Captain Sir William Symonds, R.N.; Captain John Washington, R.N.; Lieut. Col. Colquhoun, R.A.; Lieut. Col. Alderson, R.E.; Sir J. H. Pelly, Bart.; Captain Fisher, R.N.; James Walker, Esq., President of the Institution of Civil Engineers.

These gentlemen were accordingly appointed, and their report has just made its appearance. It contains the following important conclusions to which the commissioners arrived after an inspection of the various channel harbours:—

First.—That a harbour be constructed in Dover Bay, with an area of 520 acres up in low-water mark, or 330 acres without the two-fathom edge; with an entrance 709 feet wide on the south front, and another of 150 at the east end.

"Entertaining the strong opinion we have expressed of the necessity of providing, without delay, a sheltered anchorage in Dover Bay, we venture to urge upon your lordships' attention the advantage of immediately beginning the work by carrying out that portion which is to commence at Cheesman's Head.

"Whatever may be finally decided upon as to the form and extent of the works in Dover Bay, the pier from Cheesman's Head, run out into seven fathoms water, appears to be indispensable as a commencement, and it will afford both facility and shelter to the works to be subsequently carried on for their completion.

"This will give sheltered access to the present harbour during south-west gales, and protect it from the entrance of shingle from the westward; it will afford time also for observation on the movement of the shingle within the bay, and for further inquiry as to the tendency which harbours of large area, on this part of the coast, may have to silt up.

"These inquiries the commission consider to be of essential importance, and the results will afford the means of determining on the greater or less width that should be given to the entrances of the proposed harbour.

"Secondly.—We propose that a breakwater be constructed in Seaford Road, in a depth of about seven fathoms of water, one mile in extent, and sheltering an area of 300 acres.

"Thirdly.—That a breakwater be constructed in Portland Bay, to extend a mile and a quarter in a north-easterly direction, from near the northern point of the island, in about seven fathoms of water, having an opening of 150 feet at a quarter of a mile from the shore, and sheltering an area of nearly 1,200 acres.

"If only one work is to be undertaken at a time, we give the preference to Dover, next to Portland, and thirdly to Seaford.

MODE OF CONSTRUCTION.

"We are directed by your lordships to report on the expense to be incurred by the completion of the works which we recommend; but as no approximate estimate of this can be made without determining the general principles and modes of construction, we have examined the engineers who have come before us and other authorities upon these important points.

"The various opinions have been considered by the commission, who prefer for the construction of breakwaters, and for the security of the works of defence upon them, the erection of walls of masonry.

"The commission do not offer any opinion as to the profile or degree of slope necessary to insure to the structure the requisite stability. They consider that this will be best decided by the government, under professional advice, when the works shall be finally determined on.

"The cost of either mode of construction having been stated to be nearly the same, whether it be masonry or long slope of rough stone similar to that of Plymouth Breakwater, the commission beg to lay before your lordships an approximate estimate of the works at the several places, viz:—

Dover	£2,500,000
Seaford	1,250,000
Portland	500,000
Harwich	50,000

BATHS AND WASH-HOUSES.

A numerous and important meeting of the clergy and gentry of the parish of St. Pancras took place last week at the vestry rooms, Gordon-square, for the purpose of carrying into effect the establishment of baths and wash-houses for the labouring classes in that populous and extensive district. Mr. J. Harris, of the Hampstead-road, occupied the chair, and amongst the gentlemen present were the Rev. W. Dodsworth, the Rev. Dr. Berghing, the Rev. H. Hughes, the Rev. D. Lang, Mr. J. P. Gibbons, Mr. E. Wilson, Mr. W. Douglas, Mr. J. H. Smith, &c. A report was presented, from which it appeared that in consequence of a communication having been received from the Central Society for the Establishment of Baths and Wash-houses for the Labouring Classes, recommending the formation of a branch association in that parish, a committee had been appointed, who had come to a resolution, "That the establishment of baths and wash-houses was highly desirable for the comfort and cleanliness as well as for the health of the labouring classes, and they therefore cordially approve the formation of a branch society in the parish of St. Pancras, to carry out that object." The committee felt it their duty to make an earnest appeal to the inhabitants to furnish them with funds necessary for the erection of public baths and wash-houses on a suitable scale in one or more districts of the parish. The report having been adopted, it was resolved that deputations should wait on his Grace the Duke of Bedford, the Marquis of Camden, Lord Southampton, Lord Somers, and other great landed proprietors of the district, to solicit their aid and co-operation.

The following instance of liberality on the part of a public company in setting a noble example, will, we trust, not be without effect. At the annual meeting of the proprietors of the Birmingham Fire Office held last week, it was resolved that 50l. be given in aid of the funds now being raised for the establishment of public baths in that town.

From Bath we hear that the committee of gentlemen who have taken up the laudable object of providing Baths and wash-houses for the poor of that city, are prosecuting their inquiries on the subject, and that they have been in communication with Messrs. Green and Simms, the lessees of the baths, with reference to the availability of the surplus hot water of their establishments (which, we are informed, amounts to 5,000 hog-heads per week). During the last four years about 4,000 gratuitous hot baths have been annually furnished to the poor by the lessees of the baths, upon the simple recommendation of any medical gentleman, stating that the individuals recommended were likely to be benefited by the waters, and unable to pay for their use.

OPENING OF THE CITY HALL, PERTH.

This edifice was opened last Wednesday week with a civic banquet, combining also the attraction of a grand concert and the eloquence of public speakers. The arrangements were on a liberal scale and well regulated, and although at least from 1,300 to 1,400 persons were accommodated within the walls of that one apartment, there was no crowding, no confusion. The Perth Constitutional says, "The decorations are in the first style of taste, and will have grander appearance when the skill of the painters shall have been brought to bear upon them. On this occasion all was white—the drapery of the platform and ceiling of the tables, which were of a light crimson, contrasting finely therewith. The sixteen tall pillars, serving for an many candelabra, surrounded with ornamental branches (eight on each of the principal four, and six on each of the rest), sent forth a flood of light without producing any degree of shadow.

LIST OF NEW PATENTS RELATING TO ARCHITECTURE, ENGINEERING, &c. GRANTED FOR ENGLAND.

Furnished by Mr. A. Prince, of the Office for Patents of Inventions, Lincoln's Inn Fields.

[SIX MONTHS FOR EXAMINATION.]

William Hannis Taylor, of West Strand, gentleman, for certain improvements in propelling. January 2.

John Gullup, of Charles-street, Middlesex, engineer, for improvements in spring hinges, in spring roller blinds, and in applying springs to easy chairs and carriages. January 11.

Henry Cartwright, of the Dean, near Bromley, Kent, farmer, for certain improvements in the construction of paddle-wheels. January 11.

Robert Griffiths, of Smethwick, Birmingham, engineer, for improvements in the manufacture of bolts, railway pins, spikes, and rivets. January 11.

George Spencer, of Hungerford-street, Strand, engineers' draughtsman, for improvements in propelling vessels on inland waters. January 11.

Stephen Perry, of Woodland-place, St. John's Wood, gentleman, for improvements in the application of springs to locks and other fastenings, in paper-holders, to candle-lamps, to blinds, window-ashes and doors, and to seats and elastic surfaces for sitting and reclining on. January 11.

Henry Charles Lacy, of Kenyon-house, Manchester, esquire, and George Watson Buck, of Manchester, civil engineer, for a new manufacture for and method of sustaining the rails of railways. January 14.

John James Osborne, of Macclesfield, gentleman, for certain improvements in the manufacture of iron and steel, and in the furnaces to be employed for such or similar manufactures. (Being a communication.) January 16.

Henry Adolphe Dubern, of Paris, merchant, for improvements in atmospheric railways. (Being a communication.) January 16.

James Palmer Budd, of Yatalyera iron works, Swansea, merchant, for improvements in the manufacture of iron. January 16.

John McVillie, of Upper Harley-street, esquire, for improvements in propelling vessels. January 21.

William Yates, of Manchester, ophthalmic and Denis Dolan, of the same place, scientific manufacturer, for certain improvements in plastic manufacture or composition, part of which is applicable to decorative and useful purposes, and part as a fireproof cement or plastic. January 21.

John Clay, of Edgely, Chester, corn-dealer, for an improved apparatus for consuming smoke. January 21.

Peter Borrie, of Prince's-square, Saint George's-in-the-East, engineer, for improvements in the construction and fitting or equipping of ships of vessels. January 23.

William George Henry Twinn, of Liverpool, civil engineer, for improvements in machinery for revolving windlasses, barrels, spindles, shafts, and for pumping. January 25.

The Earl of Dundonald, for an improved rotary engine to be impelled by steam, and which may be also rendered applicable to other purposes (being an extension for the term of 14 years of letters patent granted to him by His late Majesty King William the Fourth, for the said invention). January 28.

George James Norton, of Weymouth, cook and confectioner, for an improved cooking apparatus, parts of which are also applicable to the purposes of lighting and heating. January 28.

John Keech, of Conduit-street, Hanover-square, tailor, for improvements in stoves and apparatus used in consuming fuel, and in ventilating. January 28.

Matthew Allen, of Worship-street, Shoreditch, builder, for certain improvements in stoves and apparatus for heating. January 31.

Henry Page, of Cambridge, painter, for certain improvements in the mode of painting or decorating with oil and other colours. January 30.

Thomas Middleton, of Loman-street, Southwark, engineer, for improvements in machinery for the manufacture of artificial gas, bricks, tiles, and other similar articles. January 31.